

**AGN. NO.**

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**June 14, 2016**

**Proclaim June 2016 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month**

Every year, an estimated 5 million of the more than 46 million older Americans are victims of elder abuse or neglect. In a survey of nursing home staff in the U.S., 36% reported having witnessed at least one incident of physical abuse of an elderly patient in the previous year, 10% admitted having committed at least one act of physical abuse themselves, and 40% said that they had psychologically abused patients. The National Resource Council states that 93% of elder abuse goes unreported. Globally, the abuse and neglect of older persons is also under-recognized. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 26 million elderly people (4 – 6% of the world's 524 million people 65 years and older) have experienced some form of abuse in the home.

Financial exploitation is a fast-growing form of abuse of seniors and adults with disabilities. According to the National Adult Protective Services Association, the number and complexity of reports involving financial abuse of vulnerable and older adults has grown significantly over the past decade, with 1 in 20 older adults reporting some form

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of perceived financial mistreatment occurring in the recent past. Financial exploitation commonly involves trusted persons in the life of the vulnerable adult. Financial abuse spans a broad spectrum of conduct, including: stealing money or property; forgery; obtaining a person's signature on a deed, will, or power of attorney through deception, coercion, or undue influence; telemarketing and e-mail scams; and confidence crimes. The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse has declared Wednesday, June 15, 2016 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). The first WEAAD in 2006 involved several hundred organizations and governmental bodies at international, national, and local levels in every continent. WEAAD is in alignment with the United Nations International Plan of Action which recognizes the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. Additionally, 2016 is the inaugural year of the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging's month-long campaign for Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month, with the purpose of educating mandated reporters and the general public on the signs of elder and dependent adult abuse and the reporting process.

Research indicates that public education campaigns are vital to educating people on how to identify and prevent the growing problem of elder abuse. The County of Los Angeles should join the numerous organizations, educational institutions, religious groups, thought leaders in the field of aging, advocates, and older persons themselves in raising awareness of the warning signs of elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect. No community or country in the world is immune from this costly public health and human rights crisis; Los Angeles County is no exception.

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**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors proclaim June 2016 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness month throughout Los Angeles County and encourage the Departments of Community and Senior Services (Adult Protective Services), Consumer and Business Affairs, Coroner, Health Services (LAC-USC Medical Center and Harbor-UCLA Medical Center), Mental Health (GENESIS and the Office of the Public Guardian), Public Social Services, Sheriff, the Office of the District Attorney (Elder Abuse Section), the Long Term Care Ombudsman, and the Los Angeles County Forensic Center to continue serving elderly residents and dependent adults with disabilities and educating the general public on the prevention, reporting, and eradication of elder and dependent adult abuse.

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